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ORIG: [REDACTED]
 UNIT: D/FA/OSA
 EXT: [REDACTED]
 DATE: 28 FEB 66

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CLASSIFIED MESSAGE
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TO: [REDACTED]
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PRIORITY [REDACTED] INFO [REDACTED] CITE [REDACTED]

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1. THIS MSG INTENDED ONLY TO ATTEMPT TO KEEP YOU ABREAST OF THE INVESTIGATION IN PROCESS AT EDWARDS AFB AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED CONCLUSIVE OR CAUSE SPECULATION AS TO THE FINAL ANALYSIS OF THE ACCIDENT.

2. MIKE HAS VISITED THE SCENE WHICH TURNS OUT TO BE A VERY ROUGH, HILLY AREA AND AT THIS MOMENT THE ONLY PART OF THE ACFT LOCATED IS THE ENGINE. RECOVERY OF THE ENGINE WILL BE A MAJOR UNDERTAKING. MIKE IS TODAY PHOTOGRAPHING THE AREA USING AN "A" MODEL ACFT AT MEDIUM ALTITUDE IN AN EFFORT TO LOCATE OTHER PARTS OF THE ACFT. IN ADDITION, HE IS RENTING HONDAS AND HORSES TO ENABLE HIM TO CONTINUE THE SEARCH. HELICOPTERS AND OTHER SEARCH METHODS WILL BE EMPLOYED.

3. YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE INITIAL RUNDOWN ON THE PILOT'S STATEMENT AND THE LAST INFORMATION I HAVE WOULD INDICATE LITTLE OR NO CHANGE TO HIS POSITION EXCEPT AS INDICATED BELOW. GEN LEDFORD, [REDACTED] AND I SAT IN ON THE ENTIRE DEBRIEFING OF THE TANKER CREW AND I WILL

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ATTEMPT TO SUMMARIZE THEIR REPORT WITHOUT SPECULATING ON THE CAUSE.

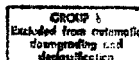
A. THE PILOT HAD COMPLETED NINE DRY HOOKUPS AND THE FINAL HOOKUP WAS A PRACTICE EMERGENCY BREAKAWAY CALLED BY THE U-2 PILOT AND EXECUTED SMOOTHLY. ALL MEMBERS OF THE TANKER CREW WERE MOST COMPLIMENTARY ABOUT THE U-2 PILOT'S ABILITY FOR INFLIGHT REFUELING. IT WAS SIGNIFICANT THAT THE PILOT WAS ABLE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO EFFECTIVELY HOOKUP WITH THE TANKER WITH NO ASSISTANCE FROM THE BOOM OPERATOR. THIS MANEUVER IS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE BOOM OPERATOR POSITIONING THE REFUELING BOOM AND MAINTAINING A CONSTANT POSITION AND THE REFUELING ACFT MANEUVERING TO A POINT AND AFFECTING THE HOOKUP.

B. UPON EXECUTION OF THE PRACTICE EMERGENCY BREAKAWAY, THE PILOT DROPPED DOWN AND BACK OF THE TANKER IN THE PROPER POSITION MOVED TO THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE TANKER APPROXIMATELY 200 FEET AND PULLED UP FORWARD OF THE TANKER WING EVEN WITH THE COCKPIT. HE WAS THEN FLYING A LOOSE FORMATION AND PASSING COMMENTS WITH THE TANKER CREW AND WAVED AS HE THEN EXECUTED HIS DEPARTURE MANEUVER.

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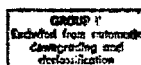
ALL TESTIMONY AT THIS POINT BY BOTH THE PILOT AND THE TANKER CREW DENIES ANY POSSIBILITY THAT THE U-2 WAS EVER SUBJECTED TO JET WASH OR WING WASH FROM THE TANKER ACFT. HE FURTHER DENIED THAT THE BREAKAWAY MANEUVER WAS VIOLENT IN ANY WAY. THE SPEED OF THE RECEIVER IN FORMATION WAS APPROXIMATELY 210 KNOTS INDICATED AIR SPEED AT 35,000 FEET.

C. AT APPROXIMATELY 210 KNOTS THE PILOT EXECUTED A PULL UP FROM THE TANKER AND A RIGHT TURN WHICH PROBABLY PUT HIM IN AN ATTITUDE OF APPROXIMATELY 20° CLIMB ANGLE AT 20 TO 25° BANK ANGLE. THIS MANEUVER APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TWO MANEUVERS BEGINNING INITIALLY WITH THE CLIMB WITH THE TURN FOLLOWING. THE INITIAL CLIMB APPEARED TO ALL OBSERVERS TO BE PERFECTLY NORMAL AND THE STANDARD DEPARTURE USED BY MOST U-2 PILOTS. AFTER PRACTICE REFUELING, THE ONLY ITEM NOTED IN THE CLIMB WAS A BEGINNING OF WHAT APPEARED TO BE A FUEL ^{VENT} JET OR LEAK ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE ACFT FORWARD OF THE TRAILING EDGE OF THE WING AND REAR OF THE WING ROOT. THE TANKER CREW INITIALLY ASSUMED IT TO BE A NORMAL ^{VENT} JET OF FUEL AND WERE NOT CONCERNED. ANY

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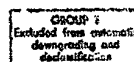
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BETTER DEFINITION OF THE FUEL LEAK WILL HAVE TO AWAIT THE INVESTIGATOR'S REPORT. AS THE U-2 INITIATED THE RIGHT TURN, THE CO-PILOT AND THE NAVIGATOR WERE BOTH WATCHING HIS ACFT AND BOTH STATED THAT THEY OBSERVED A SEPARATION OF THE LEFT WING AT THE WING ROOT. THE ENTIRE WING THEN APPEARED TO FALL BACK TOWARD THE ACFT AND SEPARATED AND DEPARTED APPARENTLY OVER THE TAIL. AT THIS POINT THE ACFT APPEARED TO ASSUME AN ATTITUDE OF APPROXIMATELY 60° CLIMB ANGLE AND THE RIGHT WING DISINTEGRATED. NO OBSERVATIONS WERE MADE OF THE TAIL. HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME THE WING DISINTEGRATED THE ENTIRE ENGINE FLOATED PAST THE KC-135. IN THE OBSERVERS TERMS "THE ENGINE WAS ^{BARE}BEAR". THEY WERE CLOSE ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE COLOR OF THE ~~Ø~~ LINER AND DISCUSSED IN DETAIL THEIR ABILITY TO SEE LINES AND FITTINGS ON THE ENGINE. THIS APPEARED TO BE CLOSE ENOUGH THAT THE CO-PILOT WAS INITIALLY CONCERNED THAT IT MIGHT FALL ON THE TANKER. AT THIS POINT THE DESCRIPTION SEEMS TO BE THAT THERE WERE ONLY TWO MAJOR PORTIONS OF THIS ACFT OBSERVED. THE FIRST BEING THE ENTIRE LEFT WING AND THE SECOND BEING THE ENGINE. THE

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CO-PILOT FELT THAT HE HAD OBSERVED THE COCKPIT SECTION BUT WAS UNABLE TO IDENTIFY IT. THEIR AGREED DESCRIPTION IS THAT THE ACFT LITERALLY CAME INTO THOUSANDS OF PIECES AND THEY DESCRIBED THE SCENE AS TWO MAJOR PIECES AND THE REST OF THE ACFT APPEARED AS DEBRIS. THE TANKER CREW STAYED ON THE SCENE, FIXED THEIR POSITION AND ORBITED UNTIL RELIEVED BY HELICOPTERS. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DISINTEGRATION, THE BOOM OPERATOR SAW THE PILOT STILL IN THE SEAT BUT SEPARATED FROM THE ACFT. THE PILOT DISAPPEARED FROM THE BOOM OPERATOR'S VIEW BEFORE THE ^{CHUTE} ~~SHOOT~~ OPENED.

D. IT APPEARS NOW THAT THE COCKPIT SECTION OF THE ACFT WAS PROBABLY IN NEARLY LEVEL FLIGHT WITH A PROBABLE 15 TO 30° RIGHT ROLL WHEN THE PILOT EJECTED.

4. THIS INFO IS FOR YOU ONLY. WE ARE NOT YET PREPARED TO PROVIDE THIS KIND OF DETAIL TO

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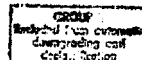
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